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(71) Applicant(s):
IGT
(Incorporated in USA - Nevada)
9295 Prototype Drive, Reno,
Nevada 89521, United States of America

(72) Inventor(s):
Andrea C Hughes-Balrd

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service:
Wilson Gunn M'Caw
5th Floor, Blackfriars House,
The Parsonage, MANCHESTER, M3 2JA,
United Kingdom

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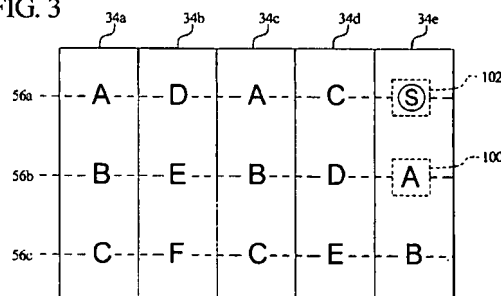
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EP 0238289 A US 6251013 B1

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(54) Abstract Title: Gaming device having a scatter pay symbol

(57) A gaming device includes a plurality of reels (34a-e) having a plurality of symbols (100). The gaming device provides an award to a player when a triggering event occurs in a game. In one embodiment, the triggering event includes the occurrence of one or more predetermined "scatter pay" symbols (102) on the reels. If at least one of the predetermined symbols occurs on the reels, the gaming device provides an award to the player for a winning symbol combination occurring in any position on the reels. In one embodiment, the gaming device provides an award for a winning symbol combination including the scatter pay symbols. In another embodiment, the gaming device provides the largest award to the player when multiple symbols combinations occur on the reels. Therefore, the scatter pay symbols enable a player to obtain larger awards and more awards in the game.

FIG. 3



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FIG. 1A

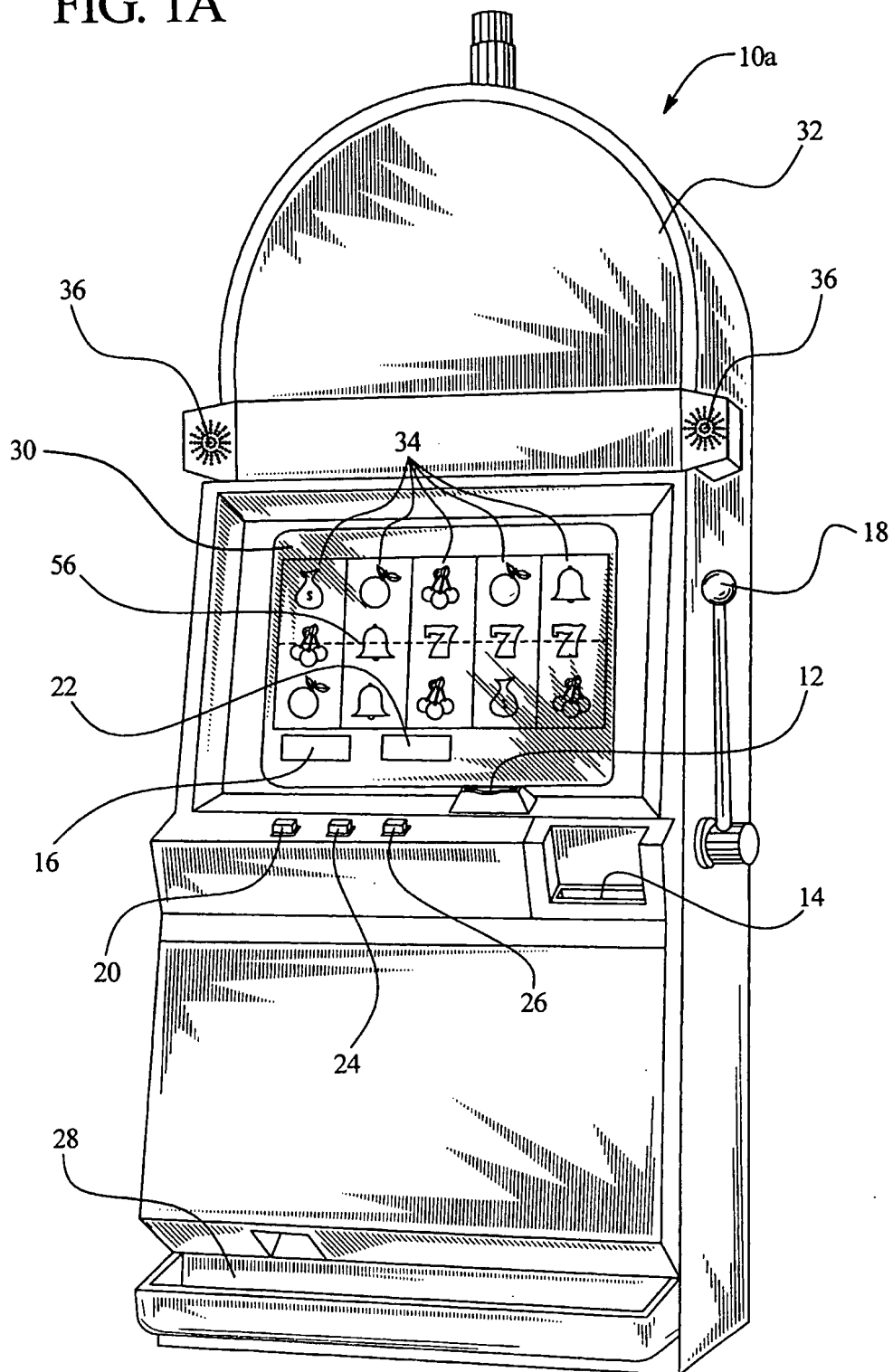


FIG. 1B

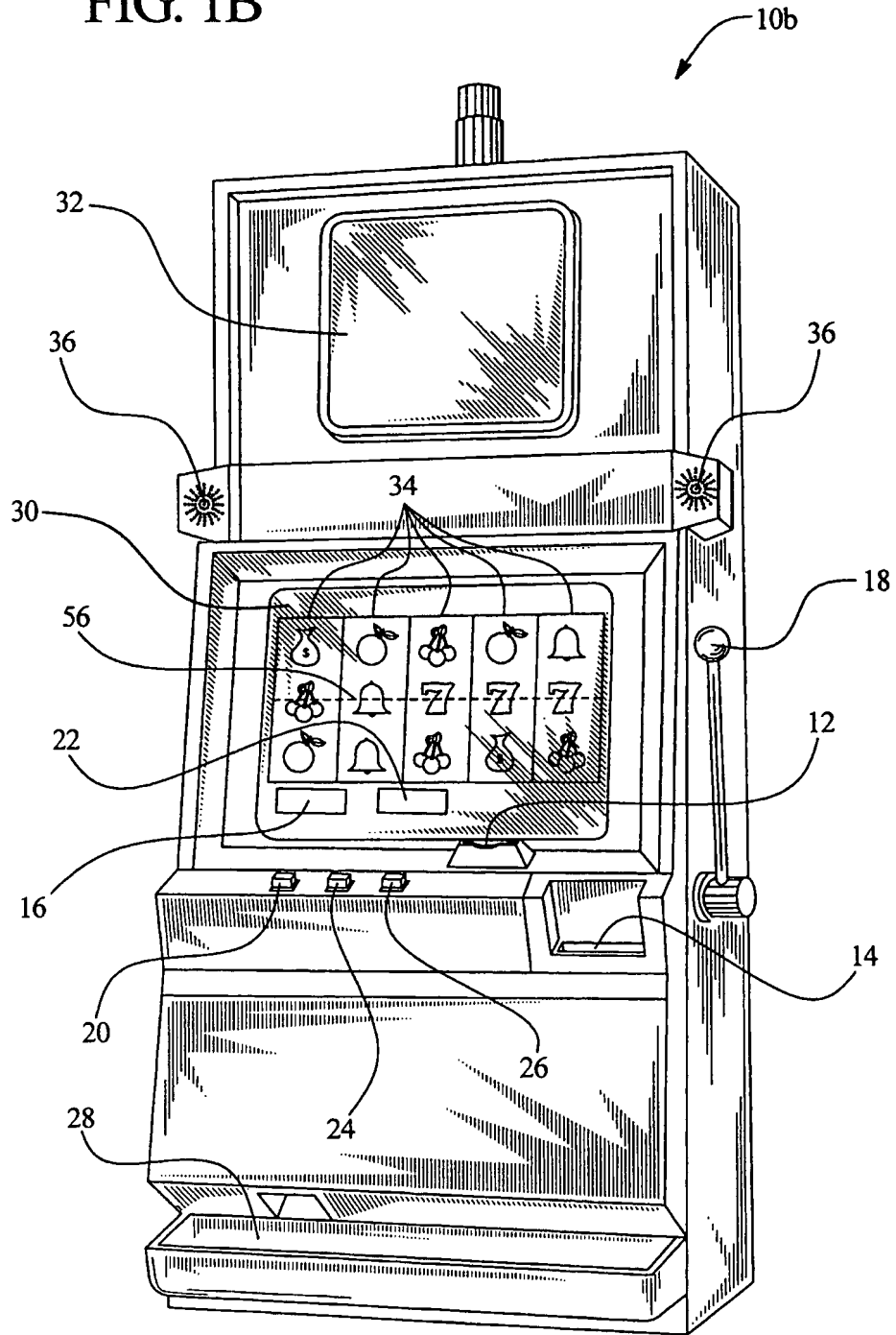


FIG. 2

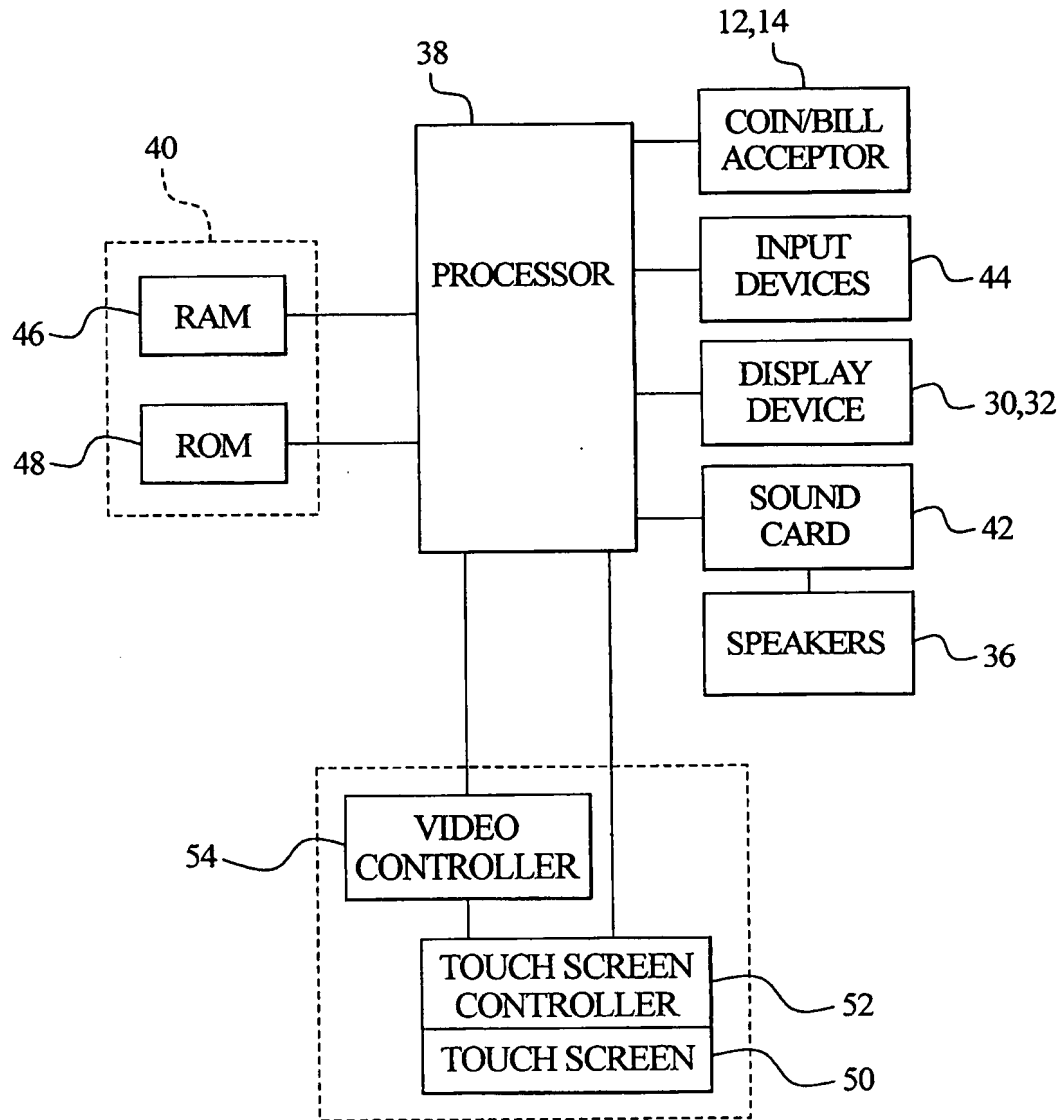


FIG. 3

	34a	34b	34c	34d	34e
56a	A	D	A	C	Ⓢ
56b	B	E	B	D	A
56c	C	F	C	E	B

FIG. 4

AWARD TABLE	
COMBINATION	AWARD
AAA	100
BBB	70
CCC	50
DDD	40
EEE	30
FFF	20
Ⓢ Ⓢ Ⓢ	10

FIG. 5a

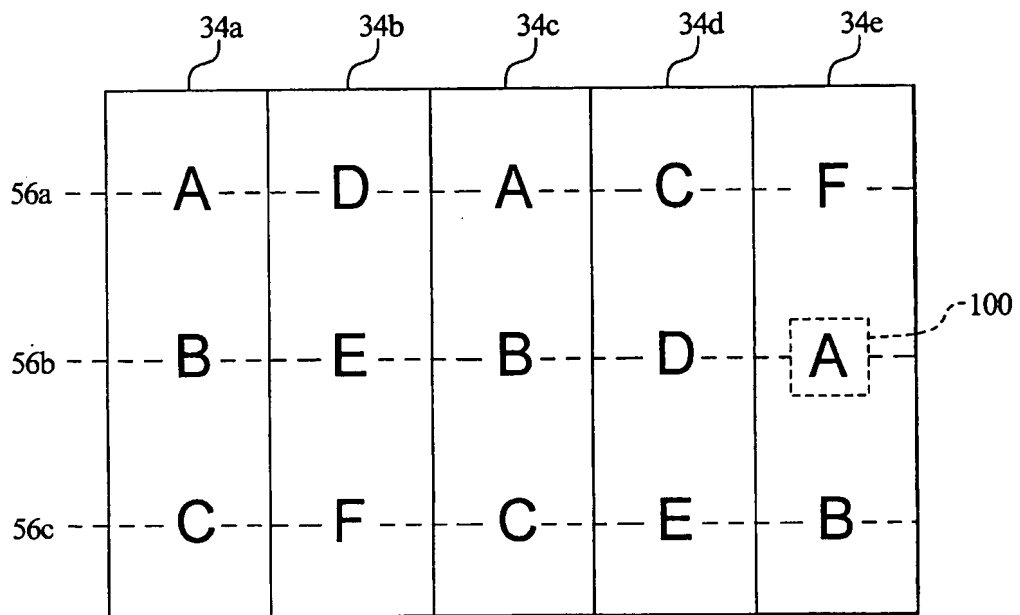


FIG. 5b

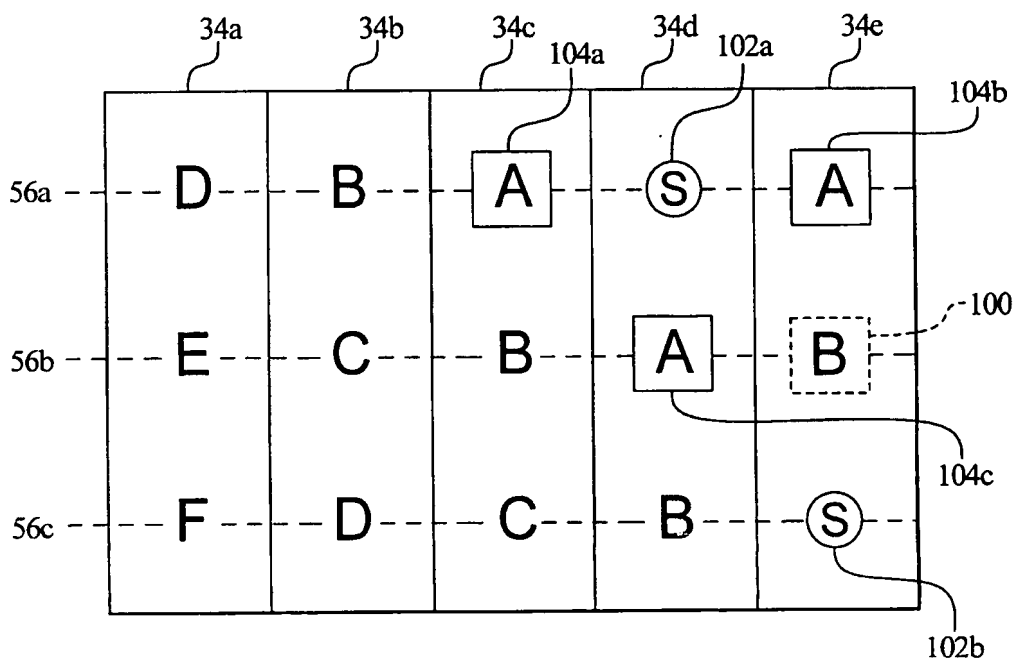
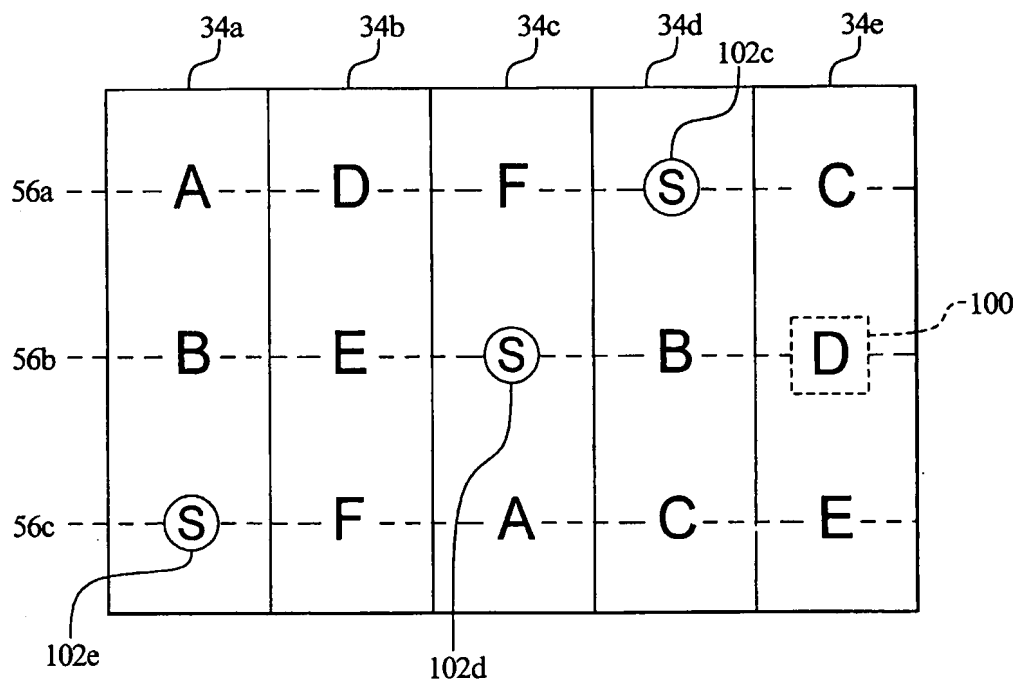


FIG. 6



SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

"GAMING DEVICE HAVING A SCATTER PAY SYMBOL"

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 Gaming device manufacturers strive to make gaming devices that provide as much enjoyment and excitement as possible. Providing a game in which a player has an opportunity to win potentially large awards or credits is one way to enhance player enjoyment and excitement.

 Currently, gaming machines or devices provide games such as slot
10 games wherein a player has one or more opportunities to obtain a winning symbol combination on mechanical or video reels. The winning symbol combination may be along the same payline or on different paylines (known as a scatter pay). By providing gaming devices with more winning symbol combinations, players' have more opportunities to receive an award.

15 One known gaming device is described in U.S. Patent No. 6,190,254. The gaming device in this patent is a slot machine that has a plurality of rotatable reels with symbols. A player spins the reels and receives an award by obtaining predetermined winning symbol combinations on the reels. This gaming device also has a "special" symbol. The special symbol acts like a
20 wildcard symbol such that when the special symbol occurs on the reels, it combines with an existing symbol combination to provide the most desirable winning symbol combination to the player in that spin. The special symbol may represent any symbol in the game and provide the most favorable winning symbol combination associated with those symbols. Therefore, the special
25 symbol increases the likelihood that a player will obtain an award.

 Another gaming device is described in U.S. Patent No. 6,056,642, which discloses a slot machine including several reels which pays an award when a symbol combination having three 7's occurs on a payline. If the three 7's occur on a central payline or "win line," the player receives a jackpot prize.
30 Furthermore, the winning combination of 7's is normally against a clear background. However, the background color can change and affect the award. The background color can be the same color for each symbol or each symbol can be against a different background color. The symbol combinations

combined with the color combinations provide several award opportunities for players.

Gaming devices that increase the opportunities to obtain awards and increase the size of the awards are desirable. Players are attracted to games
5 that provide several larger awards. Therefore, to increase player enjoyment and excitement, it is desirable to provide new games for gaming devices.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a gaming device and in particular a primary game of a gaming device that enables players to obtain larger awards
10 and more awards in a game.

In one embodiment, the gaming device includes a plurality of reels having a plurality of symbols in a game. The gaming device also includes a triggering event including at least one predetermined symbol such as a scatter pay symbol in the game. The gaming device activates or spins the reels and
15 determines whether one or more scatter pay symbols occur on the reels (i.e., if the triggering event occurs on the reels). In one embodiment, if the triggering event occurs, the gaming device provides an award for any designated winning symbol combination including two or more symbols occurring in any of the positions on the reels (i.e., a scatter pay combination) in the game. In another
20 embodiment, a scatter pay may occur when one or more designated symbols occurs in any position or designated positions on the reels.

In one embodiment, the triggering event occurs when the scatter pay symbols appear on a payline associated with the reels in the game. In another embodiment the triggering event occurs when the scatter pay symbol or
25 symbols appear in any position on the reels in the game. Accordingly, the triggering event causes the game in which the triggering event occurred to pay for scatter wins. The scatter pay symbol enables a player to obtain more awards and larger awards in a game.

In another embodiment, the gaming device provides an award for a
30 winning symbol combination including the scatter pay symbols in the game. In one aspect of this embodiment, the player obtains the largest award associated with the winning symbol combinations occurring in any position on the reels when one or more scatter pay symbols occurs on the reels in the game. In

another aspect of this embodiment, the gaming device provides an award for any winning symbol combinations occurring on the reels and also the award associated with the winning symbol combination including the scatter pay symbols that occurs on the reels, if any. Thus, the player can obtain multiple
5 awards in a game.

It is therefore an advantage of the present invention to provide a gaming device that provides several award opportunities to a player in a game.

Another advantage of the present invention is to provide a gaming device that enables a player to obtain more awards in a game.

10 As a further advantage of the present invention to provide a gaming device that includes several winning symbol combinations.

Other objects, features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following detailed disclosure, taken in conjunction with the accompanying sheets of drawings, wherein like numerals refer to like parts,
15 elements, components, steps and processes.

Additional features and advantages of the present invention are described in, and will be apparent from, the following Detailed Description of the Invention and the figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

20 Fig. 1A is a front perspective view of one embodiment of the gaming device of the present invention.

Fig. 1B is a front perspective view of another embodiment of the gaming device of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a schematic block diagram of the electronic configuration of one
25 embodiment of the gaming device of the present invention.

Fig. 3 is an enlarged elevation view of one of the display device of Figs. 1A and 1B, which illustrates one embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 4 is a schematic view of one embodiment of an award table employed in the present invention.

30 Fig. 5A and 5B are enlarged front elevation views of an example of the embodiment shown in Fig. 3 illustrating two spins by a player in the game.

Fig. 6 is an enlarged front elevation of another embodiment of the present invention where three scatter pay symbols occur on the reels.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Gaming Device and Electronics

Referring now to the drawings, two embodiments of the gaming device of the present invention are illustrated in Figs. 1A and 1B as gaming device 10a and gaming device 10b, respectively. Gaming device 10a and/or gaming device 10b are generally referred to herein as gaming device 10. Gaming device 10 is preferably a slot machine having the controls, displays and features of a conventional slot machine. It is constructed so that a player can operate it while standing or sitting, and gaming device 10 is preferably mounted on a console. However, it should be appreciated that gaming device 10 can be constructed as a pub-style table-top game (not shown) which a player can operate preferably while sitting. Furthermore, gaming device 10 can be constructed with varying cabinet and display designs, as illustrated by the designs shown in Figs. 1A and 1B. Gaming device 10 can also be implemented as a program code stored in a detachable cartridge for operating a hand-held video game device. Also, gaming device 10 can be implemented as a program code stored on a disk or other memory device which a player can use in a desktop or laptop personal computer or other computerized platform.

Gaming device 10 can incorporate any primary game such as slot, black jack, poker or keno, any of the bonus triggering events and any of the bonus round games. The symbols and indicia used on and in gaming device 10 may be in mechanical, electrical, electronic or video form.

As illustrated in Figs. 1A and 1B, gaming device 10 includes a coin slot 12 and bill acceptor 14 where the player inserts money, coins or tokens. The player can place coins in the coin slot 12 or paper money or ticket vouchers in the bill acceptor 14. Other devices could be used for accepting payment such as readers or validators for credit cards or debit cards. When a player inserts money in gaming device 10, a number of credits corresponding to the amount deposited is shown in a credit display 16. After depositing the appropriate amount of money, a player can begin the game by pulling arm 18 or pushing play button 20. Play button 20 can be any play activator used by the player which starts any game or sequence of events in the gaming device.

As shown in Figs. 1A and 1B, gaming device 10 also includes a bet

display 22 and a bet one button 24. The player places a bet by pushing the bet one button 24. The player can increase the bet by one credit each time the player pushes the bet one button 24. When the player pushes the bet one button 24, the number of credits shown in the credit display 16 decreases by one, and the number of credits shown in the bet display 22 increases by one.

A player may cash out and thereby receive a number of coins corresponding to the number of remaining credits by pushing a cash out button 26. When the player cashes out, the player receives the coins in a coin payout tray 28. The gaming device 10 may employ other payout mechanisms such as credit slips redeemable by a cashier or electronically recordable cards which keep track of the player's credits.

Gaming device 10 also includes one or more display devices. The embodiment shown in Fig. 1A includes a central display device 30, and the alternative embodiment shown in Fig. 1B includes a central display device 30 as well as an upper display device 32. Gaming device 10 displays a plurality of reels 34 such as three to five reels 34 in mechanical or video form at one or more of the display devices. A display device can be any viewing surface such as glass, a video monitor or screen, a liquid crystal display or any other display mechanism. If the reels 34 are in video form, the display device for the video reels 34 is preferably a video monitor.

Each reel 34 displays a plurality of indicia such as bells, hearts, fruits, numbers, letters, bars or other images which preferably correspond to a theme associated with the gaming device 10. Furthermore, gaming device 10 preferably includes speakers 36 for making sounds or playing music.

As illustrated in Fig. 2, the general electronic configuration of gaming device 10 preferably includes: a processor 38; a memory device 40 for storing program code or other data; a central display device 30; an upper display device 32; a sound card 42; a plurality of speakers 36; and one or more input devices 44. The processor 38 is preferably a microprocessor or microcontroller-based platform which is capable of displaying images, symbols and other indicia such as images of people, characters, places, things and faces of cards. The memory device 40 can include random access memory (RAM) 46 for storing event data or other data generated or used during a particular game. The

memory device 40 can also include read only memory (ROM) 48 for storing program code which controls the gaming device 10 so that it plays a particular game in accordance with applicable game rules and pay tables.

As illustrated in Fig. 2, the player preferably uses the input devices 44,
5 such as pull arm 18, play button 20, the bet one button 24 and the cash out button 26 to input signals into gaming device 10. In certain instances it is preferable to use a touch screen 50 and an associated touch screen controller 52 instead of a conventional video monitor display device. Touch screen 50 and touch screen controller 52 are connected to a video controller 54 and
10 processor 38. A player can make decisions and input signals into the gaming device 10 by touching touch screen 50 at the appropriate places. As further illustrated in Fig. 2, the processor 38 can be connected to coin slot 12 or bill acceptor 14. The processor 38 can be programmed to require a player to deposit a certain amount of money in order to start the game.

15 It should be appreciated that although a processor 38 and memory device 40 are preferable implementations of the present invention, the present invention can also be implemented using one or more application-specific integrated circuits (ASIC's) or other hard-wired devices, or using mechanical devices (collectively or alternatively referred to herein as a "processor").
20 Furthermore, although the processor 38 and memory device 40 preferably reside on each gaming device 10 unit, it is possible to provide some or all of their functions at a central location such as a network server for communication to a playing station such as over a local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), Internet connection, microwave link, and the like. The processor 38 and
25 memory device 40 is generally referred to herein as the "computer" or "controller."

With reference to Figs. 1A, 1B and 2, to operate the gaming device 10 in one embodiment the player must insert the appropriate amount of money or tokens at coin slot 12 or bill acceptor 14 and then pull the arm 18 or push the
30 play button 20. The reels 34 will then begin to spin. Eventually, the reels 34 will come to a stop. As long as the player has credits remaining, the player can spin the reels 34 again. Depending upon where the reels 34 stop, the player may or may not win additional credits.

In addition to winning credits in this manner, gaming device 10 also gives players the opportunity to win credits in a bonus round. This type of gaming device 10 will include a program which will automatically begin a bonus round when the player has achieved a qualifying condition in the game. This
5 qualifying condition can be a particular arrangement of indicia on a display device. The gaming device 10 preferably uses a video-based central display device 30 to enable the player to play the bonus round. Preferably, the qualifying condition is a predetermined combination of indicia appearing on one or more of a plurality of the reels 34. As illustrated in the five reel slot game
10 shown in Figs. 1A and 1B, the qualifying condition could be the number seven appearing on three adjacent reels 34 along a payline 56. It should be appreciated that the present invention can include one or more paylines, such as payline 56, wherein the paylines can be horizontal, diagonal or any combination thereof. In one embodiment, the present invention is employed in
15 a bonus or secondary game triggered in a primary or base game.

Scatter Pay Symbol

Referring to Fig. 3, the gaming device 10 includes a plurality of reels 34a, 34b, 34c, 34d and 34e in a game, which include a plurality of symbols 100 designated with the letters A, B, C, D and E. The reels also include at least one
20 scatter pay symbol 102. Additionally, a plurality of paylines 56a, 56b and 56c are associated with the reels in a conventional manner. It should be appreciated that any suitable number of paylines 56 may be associated with the reels in the game. It should also be appreciated that any suitable number of reels may be used in a game. In this embodiment, the symbols 100 are letters
25 A, B, C, D, E and F, however, the reels 34 may include any suitable symbol or symbols.

In one embodiment, the reels 34a to 34e include one or more scatter pay symbols 102. In the game, if one or more of the scatter pay symbols 102 occur on the reels 34a to 34e (i.e., triggering event), the gaming device provides an
30 award or awards for any predetermined winning or designated symbol or symbol combinations that occur on a single payline or on several paylines (i.e., scatter pay combination) associated with the reels. Thus, the occurrence of the scatter pay symbol 102 causes the scatter pay and enables a player to obtain

an additional award or awards, and potentially a larger award in the game. The awards may include values, prizes, free spins, free games, bonus games, multipliers or any other suitable award.

Referring to Fig. 4, an example of an award table which is employed in
5 an embodiment of the present invention is illustrated. The award table 200 includes several predetermined winning symbol combinations 202 and awards 204 associated with those combinations in a game. In the award table 200, any combination of three identical symbols on a single payline provides an award to the player in the game. In this table, three A's on a single payline provides an
10 award of one hundred. Similarly, three B's, three C's, three D's, three E's and three F's provide awards of seventy, fifty, forty, thirty and twenty respectively. Additionally, the gaming device provides an award if three of the scatter pay symbols 102 occur on a single payline associated with the reels in the game. In this example, three scatter pay symbols on a payline provides an award of ten
15 to the player. It should be appreciated that any predetermined combinations of symbols may be designated as winning symbol combinations and any suitable awards may be associated with those combinations.

Referring to Figs. 5A, 5B and 5C, an example of the embodiment shown in Fig. 3 is illustrated where the gaming device provides the player with three
20 spins of the reels 34a to 34e in the game. In Fig. 5A, the player uses their first spin in the game to activate the reels 34. The gaming device spins the reels and provides any awards to the player for winning symbol combinations that occur on a single payline 56a, 56b or 56c. In this example, the winning combinations are designated in the award table illustrated in Fig. 4. According
25 to the award table, the player must obtain three identical symbols on a single payline or three identical symbols on several paylines, if one or more scatter symbols 102 occur on the reels, to obtain an award in the game. After the first spin, the player did not obtain a winning symbol combination on any one of the paylines 56a, 56b or 56c as shown in Fig. 5A. Additionally, no scatter pay
30 symbols 102 occurred on the reels 34. Therefore, the gaming device does not provide an award to the player. If one or more scatter pay symbols 102 occur on the reels 34, the gaming device provides an award to the player for any predetermined combination shown in the award table of Fig. 4, which occurs in

any position on the reels (i.e., a scatter pay combination) of symbols. However, since a scatter pay symbol did not occur on the reels, the gaming device does not provide any awards for this type of combination to the player.

Referring to Fig. 5B, the player uses a second spin in the game to spin or
5 activate the reels 34. The gaming device spins or activates the reels and the reels stop and indicate the symbols shown in Fig. 5B. Again, three identical symbols or a winning symbol combination did not occur on a single payline 56a, 56b or 56c. However, two scatter pay symbols 102a and 102b are indicated on paylines 56a and 56c, respectively. Although the player did not obtain three
10 identical symbols on a single payline, the player may obtain an award for a scattered combination of symbols across two or more paylines because at least one of the scatter pay symbols 102 occurred on the reels. As illustrated in Fig. 5B, three A symbols 104a, 104b and 104c are indicated on paylines 56a and 56b. Additionally, four B symbols are indicated on paylines 56a, 56b and 56c.
15 In one embodiment, the gaming device provides the largest award associated with the winning symbol combinations indicated on the reels. In another embodiment, the gaming device provides the awards associated with all of the winning symbol combinations indicated on the reels. It should be appreciated that the gaming device may provide an award for any of the winning
20 combinations of symbols indicated on the reels as desired by the game implementor. It should also be appreciated that the gaming device may provide one or more awards associated with one or more winning symbol combinations on the reels. In this example, the gaming device provides the largest award associated with the winning combinations of symbols on the reels. Therefore,
25 the gaming device provides the player with an award of one hundred for the winning symbol combination including three A symbols (i.e., the combination associated with the largest award) as shown in the award table 200 in Fig. 4. The player does not have any spins remaining in the game and therefore the game ends and the player receives the total award accumulated in the game.

30 Referring to Fig. 6, another embodiment of the present invention is illustrated where the gaming device provides an award to the player associated with a combination of symbols including the scatter pay symbols 102. In Fig. 6, the player obtained three scatter pay symbols 102c, 102d and 102e on the reels

in a game. Any one of the scatter pay symbols triggers the scatter pay combination in the game. As shown in Fig. 4, an award is associated with three identical symbols such as the three scatter pay symbols 102c, 102d and 102e. In Fig. 6, no other combinations occur on the reels so the player receives the
5 award associated with the three scatter pay symbols. In one aspect of this embodiment, the gaming device provides the largest award associated with the indicated winning symbol combinations on the reels in the game. In another aspect of this embodiment, the gaming device provides the largest award associated with the winning symbol combinations indicated on the reels and the
10 award associated with the winning combination of scatter pay symbols indicated on the reels in the game. Therefore, the player obtains multiple awards in the game. It should be appreciated that the gaming device may provide any number of awards to the player based on the winning symbol combinations indicated on the reels. In a further embodiment, the gaming device does not
15 provide any awards for the scatter pay symbols 102 occurring on the reels.

It should be appreciated that in one embodiment of the present invention the triggering event can occur in one game and apply to one or more subsequent games such that scatter pays are made in one or more subsequent games or one or more of a limited number of subsequent games.

20 While the present invention is described in connection with what is presently considered to be the most practical and preferred embodiments, it should be appreciated that the invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments, and is intended to cover various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the claims. Modifications
25 and variations in the present invention may be made without departing from the novel aspects of the invention as defined in the claims, and this application is limited only by the scope of the claims.

It should be understood that various changes and modifications to the presently preferred embodiments described herein will be apparent to those
30 skilled in the art. Such changes and modifications can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention and without diminishing its intended advantages. It is therefore intended that such changes and modifications be covered by the appended claims.

CLAIMS

The invention is claimed as follows:

1. A gaming device comprising:
 - 5 a game;
 - a plurality of reels included in the game, said reels including a plurality of symbols;
 - a triggering event in the game including at least one predetermined symbol on the reels;
 - 10 an award associated with one or more designated symbols occurring in any position on the reels in the game; and
 - a processor which controls the reels in the game and provides the award to the player when both the triggering event occurs in the game and said designated symbols occur in any position on the reels in the game.
- 15 2. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the triggering event includes a plurality of predetermined symbols occurring on the reels.
3. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes at least one payline associated with the reels.
4. The gaming device of Claim 3, wherein the triggering event
20 includes said predetermined symbol occurring on the payline.
5. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a display device, wherein the reels are displayed by the display device.
6. The gaming device of Claim 5, wherein the display device includes a video monitor.
- 25 7. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the award is associated with a plurality of designated symbols occurring in any position on the reels.
8. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a plurality of awards, each of the awards based on at least two designated symbols occurring in any position on the reels, wherein the processor provides a largest of the
30 awards to the player associated with the symbols occurring on the reels.
9. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined symbol is a scatter pay symbol.

10. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the award is at least one of the awards selected from the group consisting of: values, free spins of the reels, free games and multipliers.

11. A gaming device comprising:

5 a game;

a plurality of reels having a plurality of symbols in the game;

a payline associated with the reels in the game;

a triggering event including at least one predetermined symbol occurring on the payline in the game;

10 an award associated with one or more designated symbols occurring in any position on the reels in the game; and

a processor which controls the reels in the game and provides the award to the player when both the triggering event occurs in the game and the designated symbols occur in any position on the reels in the game.

15 12. The gaming device of Claim 11, which includes a plurality of paylines associated with the reels.

13. The gaming device of Claim 12, wherein the triggering event includes at least one predetermined symbol occurring on any one of said paylines.

20 14. The gaming device of Claim 12, wherein the triggering event includes a plurality of predetermined symbols occurring on one of said paylines.

15. The gaming device of Claim 11, wherein the award is associated with a plurality of designated symbols occurring in any position on the reels in the game.

25 16. The gaming device of Claim 11, wherein the predetermined symbol is a scatter pay symbol.

17. A gaming device comprising:

a game;

30 a plurality of reels included in the game, said reels including a plurality of symbols, said symbols including a scatter pay symbol;

a triggering event including the scatter pay symbol occurring on the reels in the game;

an award associated with one or more designated symbols occurring in

any position on the reels in the game; and

a processor which controls the reels in the game and provides the award to the player when both the triggering event occurs in the game and the designated symbols occur in any position on the reels in the game.

5 18. The gaming device of Claim 17, which includes a payline associated with the reels in the game.

19. The gaming device of Claim 18, wherein the triggering event includes the scatter pay symbol occurring on the payline in the game.

20. The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the symbols include a
10 plurality of scatter pay symbols.

21. The gaming device of Claim 20, wherein the triggering event includes the plurality of scatter pay symbols occurring on the reels in the game.

22. A gaming device comprising:

a game;

15 a plurality of reels having a plurality of symbols in the game;

a payline associated with the reels in the game;

a triggering event including at least one predetermined symbol occurring on the payline in the game;

20 an award associated with one or more designated symbols occurring in any position on the reels; and

a processor which controls the reels in the game and provides the award to the player when both the triggering event occurs in the game and the designated symbol or symbols occur in any position on the reels in a subsequent game.

25 23. The gaming device of Claim 22, wherein the subsequent game is one of a limited number of subsequent games.

24. A gaming device comprising:

a game;

30 a plurality of reels included in the game, said reels including a plurality of symbols, said symbols including a scatter pay symbol;

a triggering event including the scatter pay symbol occurring on the reels in the game;

an award associated with one or more designated symbols occurring in

any position on the reels; and

a processor which controls the reels in the game and provides the award to the player when both the triggering event occurs in the game and the designed symbol or symbols occur in any position on the reels in the game or a
5 subsequent games.

25. The gaming device of Claim 24, wherein the subsequent game is one of a limited number of subsequent game.

26. A method for operating a gaming device comprising the steps of:

(a) randomly generating a plurality of symbols on a plurality of reels in
10 a game;

(b) determining if a triggering event occurs on the reels in the game;

(c) determining if one or more designated symbols occur in any position on the reels in the game when the triggering event occurs in the game; and

15 (d) providing an award to a player when the triggering event occurs in the game and the designated symbols occur in any position on the reels in the game.

27. The method of Claim 26, wherein the step of determining if the triggering event occurs on the reels includes determining if at least one
20 predetermined symbol occurs on the reels in the game.

28. The method of Claim 26, wherein the step of determining if the triggering event occurs on the reels includes determining if a plurality of predetermined symbols occur on the reels in the game.

29. The method of Claim 26, wherein the step of determining if the
25 triggering event occurs on the reels includes determining if at least one predetermined symbol occurs on a payline associated with the reels in the game.

30. The method of Claim 26, which includes the step of displaying the plurality of reels on a display device in the game.

30 31. The method of Claim 26, wherein the steps (a) to (d) are provided to the player through a data network.

32. The method of Claim 31, wherein the data network is an internet.

33. A method for operating a gaming device comprising the steps of:
- (a) randomly generating a plurality of symbols on a plurality of reels in a game;
 - (b) determining if a predetermined symbol occurs on the reels in the game;
 - (c) determining if a designated combination of symbols occurs in any position on the reels when the predetermined symbol occurs on the reels in the game; and
 - (d) providing an award to a player when the predetermined symbol occurs on the reels in the game and the designated combination of symbols occurs on the reels in the game.
34. The method of Claim 33, wherein the step of determining if the predetermined symbol occurs on the reels includes determining if the predetermined symbol occurs on a payline associated with the reels.
35. The method of Claim 33, wherein the steps (a) to (d) are provided to the player through a data network.
36. The method of Claim 35, wherein the data network is an internet.
37. A method for operating a gaming device comprising the steps of:
- (a) randomly generating a plurality of symbols on a plurality of reels in a game, wherein the symbols include at least one scatter pay symbol;
 - (b) determining if a triggering event occurs in the game, wherein the triggering event includes at least one scatter pay symbol occurring on the reels in the game;
 - (c) determining if one or more designated symbols occur in any position on the reels when the triggering event occurs in the game; and
 - (d) providing an award to a player when the triggering event occurs in the game and the designated symbols occur in any position on the reels in the game.
38. The method of Claim 37, wherein the step of determining if the triggering event occurs in the game includes determining if at least one scatter pay symbol occurs on a payline associated with the reels in the game.
39. The method of Claim 37, wherein the steps (a) to (d) are provided to the player through a data network.

40. The method of Claim 39, wherein the data network is an internet.
41. A method for operating a gaming device comprising the steps of:
- (a) randomly generating a plurality of symbols on a plurality of reels in a game;
- 5 (b) determining if a triggering event occurs on the reels in the game;
- (c) determining if one or more designated symbols occur in any position on the reels when the triggering event occurs in a subsequent game; and
- (d) providing an award to a player when the triggering event occurs in
- 10 the game and the designated symbols occur in any position on the reels in the subsequent game.
42. The method of Claim 41, wherein the steps (a) to (d) are provided to the player through a data network.
- 43 The method of Claim 42, wherein the data network is an internet.
- 15 44. A gaming device and a method substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.



Application No: GB 0321014.3
Claims searched: 1 - 43

Examiner: Tom Sutherland
Date of search: 11 December 2003

Patents Act 1977 : Search Report under Section 17

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular relevance	
X	1, 11, 17, 22, 24, 26, 37 at least.	GB 2328311 A	(BARCREST) See page 4 lines 2 to 4 and 12 to 14.
X	1, 11, 17, 22, 24, 26, 37 at least	US 6251013 B1	(BENNETT) See col. 4 lines 50 to 58.
A		GB 2226907 A	(BELL-FRUIT) Page 3 line 21 to page 4 line 4.
A		EP 0238289 A	(KK UNIVERSAL) See Figs. 3 and 4, win enhancing special symbols.

Categories:

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.

Field of Search:

Search of GB, EP, WO & US patent documents classified in the following areas of the UKC^v:

G4V

Worldwide search of patent documents classified in the following areas of the IPC⁷:

G07F

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report:

WPI, EPODOC, JAPIO